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# State News

FROM SEPT. AARP BULLETIN



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## Iowa

**ry quandary** AARP urging voters to be-  
med about a proposed  
nal amendment and be  
e in the Sept. 18 special  
l If approved, the ref-  
ould allow the state to  
45.8 million annually  
ears from a state trust  
ke up a shortfall in  
l fund, which pays for  
ams as Medicaid and  
ithout the stopgap mea-  
Robert Bentley (R) has  
17 percent budget cuts  
: agencies. Proponents  
endment is needed to  
ng taxes. Others caution  
orary fix. ■ AARP is  
ng lawmakers to seek a  
solution to the state's  
es. In the meantime, the  
has posted pros and  
the proposed amend-  
rp.org/al.

## ■ South Carolina

**Speak out** AARP is urging members to attend upcoming public  
hearings to speak out against a utility rate hike requested by South  
Carolina Electric & Gas Co. ■ If the proposal is approved, the average  
residential customer would pay an additional \$80 a year, said Teresa  
Arnold, AARP state advocacy director. The increase would result in  
SCE&G utility bills being about 30 percent to 36 percent higher than  
those of other utilities in the state. ■ "We're not talking about Cadillac  
electricity here," Arnold said. "Why is SCE&G asking for so much more  
than what Duke Energy or Progress Energy customers pay?" ■ Public  
hearings will likely be held in October and November. For updates, visit  
aarp.org/sc or call 1-866-389-5655 toll-free.

## ■ Puerto Rico

**Safe streets** AARP Puerto Rico staff and volunteers are evaluating  
the conditions of local streets and sidewalks to demand action on the  
territory's "complete streets" law, which passed in 2010. ■ Such laws  
are designed to improve access to roadways and sidewalks for all users,  
including pedestrians, bicyclists, public transit users and people with  
disabilities, as well as those driving motorcycles and cars. The Puerto  
Rico law requires government agencies and municipalities to consider  
such needs when building or upgrading roads. ■ AARP is providing a  
brochure volunteers can use to conduct "walkability" surveys of their  
communities to show where action is needed. A survey takes about an  
hour to complete. To download the brochure, go to aarp.org/pr.

## ■ Louisiana

**Grand opening** AARP Louisi-  
ana will celebrate the opening of a  
community office in New Orleans  
on Sept. 19, during the national  
AARP Life@50+ member event.  
Located at 3502 S. Carrollton Ave.  
in the Hollygrove neighborhood,  
the office will be run by AARP  
staff and volunteers, who can help  
residents age 50-plus connect with  
programs and service opportuni-  
ties in the community. ■ Like  
AARP Louisiana's main office in  
Baton Rouge, the Hollygrove office  
will be a place where members can  
pick up free information, sign up  
for an AARP Driver Safety course  
and learn about other AARP activi-  
ties and programs such as the Soul  
Steppers walking clubs. Stop by or  
call the office at 504-826-1973.

## ■ Arkansas

**Safe at the wheel** AARP  
Arkansas is seeking volunteer  
instructors for the AARP Driver  
Safety program, which in Novem-  
ber will offer its class free to veter-  
ans and their spouses. ■ Drivers  
age 55-plus who complete the  
course may be eligible for auto in-  
surance discounts. In Arkansas 34  
percent of drivers, or about 712,000  
people, make up this age group.  
■ The course, open to motorists of  
all ages, covers defensive driving  
techniques and offers tips on how  
to compensate for age-related  
changes in vision, hearing and  
reaction time. ■ Call Joe Petruk,  
program coordinator, at 501-767-  
4409 to learn about becoming an  
instructor. To find a class near you,  
call 1-888-227-7669 toll-free or go  
to aarp.org/findacourse.

—Reports by Donya Currie

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## ting Rates

Percentage of citizens age 18+ who voted in the 2008 presidential election.

62.4%	Fla. 63.8	La. 70.3	Neb. 67.3	Okl. 58.7	Vt. 64.7
61.5	Ga. 64.2	Maine 71.2	Nev. 59.9	Ore. 67.6	Va. 68.7
59.9	Hawaii 51.8	Md. 68.3	N.H. 71.2	Pa. 62.4	Wash. 66.8
53.8	Idaho 61.4	Mass. 67.1	N.J. 64.1	R.I. 67.4	W.Va. 53.4
63.4	Ill. 62.6	Mich. 67.8	N.M. 62.6	S.C. 65.6	Wis. 71.2
68.4	Ind. 60.5	Minn. 75	N.Y. 58.8	S.D. 67.8	Wyo. 64.3
67.2	Iowa 70.2	Miss. 69.7	N.C. 67.5	Tenn. 55.5	
67.3	Kan. 63.3	Mo. 65.8	N.D. 67.5	Texas 56.1	
74.1	Ky. 63.1	Mont. 65.4	Ohio 65.5	Utah 53.1	

SOURCE: U.S.  
CENSUS BUREAU

For other state news, go to

[aarp.org/states](http://aarp.org/states)

KENDRICK BRINSON/LUCEO